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MILITARY SITUATION IN HAI-NAN

In their advance to the South Pacific areas, the Japanese used Hai-nan as a jumping-off place. Large-scale industrial, mining, and military constructions were undertaken. After the island was returned to China, officials sent to take over the administration yielded to a desire for personal greed and gain. Goods were stolen and re-sold. Corruption and malpractice characterized the government, thus making it impossible to continue with the industrial and mining development started by the Japanese. In fact, the corrupt officials served to strengthen the Communists on this island.

The bandit leader, Hung Pai-ch'u, is at present the highest military advisor to the Communist South China Bureau. His ambitious plans definitely include Hai-nan. Since the end of World War II, the Communists have gained considerable strength. Until March of this year, they were still terrorizing western Hai-nan. Lin-kao Hsien and Yai Hsien were both attacked, under the plan to force a corridor from Yai Hsien in the south to Lin-kao Hsien to the north. The Communists eventually intended to take possession of the western portion of the island. At the time of the Communist attacks, Han Han-ying had just taken over the administration of Hai-nan, and Nationalist military strength was not strong enough to cope with the situation. The 131st Brig had not yet been sent to Hai-nan. Nevertheless, in the spring mop-up campaign, over 2,000 Communists were routed from the western portion of the island.

In the latter part of March, Nationalist troops began a search for Communist strongholds in the eastern half of Hai-nan. Bandits under Ch'en Kuang-ch'iu and Ch'en Wu-ying were attacked and defeated. With the arrival of the 131st Brig, the Communist base of operations in Ju-wan Shan was surrounded. Bandit remnants still held the high mountains and deep forest areas, coming out now and then to harass the communications centers and disrupt the routine functioning of the military and economic administration of the island.

In the Ju-wan Shan region, situated between Ch'ung-shan Hsien and Ch'eng-mai Hsien, there are two hamlets, Ju-wan and Ju-k'uo. Although there are about 200 dwellings in these two hamlets, all the inhabitants have either fled or been

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killed by the Communists. The farms and livestock have been taken over by the Communists. There is a place known as Mu-hsueh-yuan, in the northern part of Ju-wan Shan, which was the seat of the Ch'ung-shan Hsien--Ch'eng-mai Hsien Democratic Government. Here party indoctrination classes were held. Towards the end of July two Nationalist regiments surrounded and wiped out the bandits in Ju-wan Shan. The Communists now have only the hilly terrain and forests of southwestern Hsi-nan to rely on for a last-ditch stand. Their main base will probably be in Wu-chih Shan.

The Central News Agency reported on 8 September that the main force of the Communists was headed south with the intention of pushing into Yai Hsien. It is possible that the Communists might send a force of about 600 toward Ling-shui and then abruptly advance toward T'eng-ch'iao to isolate Yu-lin and San-ya. This possible Communist threat against two important mining and industrial centers of Hsi-nan is something we cannot afford to overlook, and consequently, a regiment has been sent to defend Yu-lin and San-ya. Another regiment has also been ordered to Ling-shui.

The Nationalist troops plan a mop-up operation in the central part of Hsi-nan, in the Li-shan Shan region. If this operation is successful, it will then be possible to make a direct attack on the main Communist stronghold to the south.

Nationalist strength in Hsi-nan has increased greatly since last year. The 131st Brig has been added to the 34,674 Peace-Preservation Corps troops. Recently it was decided to combine four Peace-Preservation Corps units into one brigade under the command of Lin Wo-hsin.

In order to coordinate the task of routing the Communists from their hideouts in the eastern and western regions of the island, Hsu Kuo-chun has been appointed commander of the western front, and Chang Ch'i-chung, commander of the 131st Brig, has been appointed commander of the eastern front.

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